UNITY

An Organ of Reasonable Religion.

"One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves."—*Tennyson.*

No. 27. [Vol. II.—15.] December, 1905. ONE PENNY.

On Christmas Day.

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat,
Of "Peace on earth, goodwill to men!"

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of "Peace on earth, goodwill to men!"

Till, ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day—
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime,
Of "Peace on earth, goodwill to men!"

And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said,
"For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of "Peace on earth, goodwill to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead; nor doth He sleep!
The wrong shall fail,
The right prevail,
With Peace on earth, goodwill to men!"

—H. W. Longfellow.

VARIETIES.

I will tell you what to hate. Hate hypocrisy, hate cant, hate intolerance, oppression, injustice, pharisaism; hate them as Christ hated them—with a deep, abiding, God-like hatred.—F. W. Robertson.

"It is a good thing to have a modest opinion of one's self, but it makes one a weakling to have no self-respect. Self-distrust is at the bottom of a good many failures. Cultivate independence and self-reliance, however much you may guard against self-conceit."

"That church is good which makes good men and women. That church is better which gives them right thought about the world in which they live; and that church is best which gives right thinking people work to do which will stand for ever."

Nor shall thy lips be touched with living fire
Who blow'st old altar coals with sole desire
To weld anew the spirit's broken chains.

—J. R. Lowell.

Evolution strikes at the root of all mediæval and of most modern theologies. The human race has not "fallen," as the theologians declare; the race has come up.—H. W. Beecher.

God is not dead. Truth is still safe. The doctrine of evolution will not stand unless it proves itself true; and if it proves itself true it cannot harm anything in religion that is true. It will only sweep away what is false, and surely what is false can be of no permanent value to religion or to humanity.—J. T. Sunderland.

Through the harsh noises of our day
A low sweet prelude finds its way;
Through clouds of doubt and creeds of fear
A light is breaking, calm and clear.

—Whittier.

In Polynesian mythology the earth and heaven always existed; but the earth was at first covered with water. At length the Supreme Being drew up New Zealand by means of an enchanted fish-hook. Such was the Genesis of dry land, according to Polynesian ancients.

A case is told of three inmates of one asylum, each of whom thought he was the third person in the Trinity. They were confronted; the medical officer pointed out that there could not be three such persons; one had sufficient wit to see this, and was cured of his delusion. It seems, then, that it is not always absurd to argue with the insane.

Faithful are all who love the truth,
And dare the truth to tell,
Who steadfast stand at God's right hand,
And strive to serve Him well.

—W. G. Tarrant.

Come joy and cheer to the forsaken and forgotten ones! and a happy Christmas to all!

Back to Jesus.

By the Late Rev. R. A. ARMSTRONG, B.A.

An ever increasing number of preachers and teachers are raising the cry "Back to Jesus." "If," say they, "we make Jesus the centre of our religion, we cannot go astray. Let us teach men to love him, to trust in him, to follow him, to look on him as their Saviour and Redeemer, and we may let the old theological disputes pretty much alone. Has he not said 'Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest'?"

This movement, "Back to Jesus," has done much to vitalise spiritual religion in our generation. It has made real and living once more the faith of many to whom the Creeds had become comparatively dry and innutritious. It has kindled once more in many earnest souls a beautiful and inspiring ideal of spiritual life. And it has made Jesus to tens of thousands a Person more reverently and lovingly realised than before. It has lifted the weight of spiritual depression from many heavy-laden souls, and given a new gladness and sanctity to the lives of not a few of the sons and daughters of men.

. . . . . .

But to what Jesus are we to push back? To the Jesus conceived by the theologians of the infant Catholic Church two or three hundred years after the figure of the Master had appeared in the cornfields of Galilee and the hot white streets of Jerusalem? Or to the Jesus conceived by such a writer as Paul, who, however, inspired his enthusiasm, and devoted his discipleship, had never known Jesus who sat on the Mount to talk those wondrous words to the gathered throng, and sat in the house of the Bethany sisters and blessed the loving heart of Mary? Or to the Jesus conceived by that glorious spirit who wrote the fourth of our Gospels, perhaps nearly a hundred years after that day when the darkness fell on Calvary? Or to the Jesus drawn so vividly in those earlier and simpler Gospels, which contain the parables and so many a lovely and touching story? Or to the actual Jesus, who was before all the Gospels, and of whom the picture must needs be already a little dimmed and distorted by the mists of time, even in the course of the generation or two that had lapsed between his crucifixion and the setting forth of his life and word by the very earliest of the Evangelists? Surely if we can by any means push back to this last—this first—Jesus of all, that will be best of all for us, and bring us closest to the truths that lay at his heart, and which he gave in the rich fulness of his inspiration to the world.—From "Back to Jesus," 1s., Essex Hall, London.

A Unitarian Van Mission.

Sir,—The following circular is being issued by the committee of the Missionary Conference, who will esteem the favour of the wider publicity of your columns. The subscriptions and donations will be duly advertised. Thanking you in anticipation, I am, yours truly, THOS. P. SPEDDING.

Rochdale, October 31st.

THE MISSIONARY CONFERENCE.

A UNITARIAN VAN MISSION.

Dear Sir, or Madam,

At the annual meeting of the Conference, in July last, it was decided to undertake a Van Mission in 1906.

The object of the Mission will be to spread a knowledge of Unitarian principles, in villages and districts where no Churches of our faith exist, and to co-operate with existing Churches, Missionary Associations, and Postal Missions, wherever possible. What has been attempted for cultured audiences in the addresses of Professor Carpenter, the late Rev. R. A. Armstrong, and others; and for great town audiences in Theatre Services conducted by Rev. J. Page Hopps, Rev. J. C. Street, and others; it is proposed to extend to a different class of hearers, by means of the Van Mission. Theological controversy will be avoided, and the Mission will seek to take its place side by side with, and not in opposition to, existing agencies. It is felt that on the living questions of the hour Unitarians have a message of courage and cheer which should be spoken, while the negations may safely be left to those who have a liking for them.

The Mission does not start with the ostensible idea of founding Churches. Small circles of enquirers might be formed in some places, and be brought into association with the Postal Missions. But while there are whole tracts of country destitute, and likely to remain destitute of Churches, it is open to reach them by other means. A Church building is not essential to the message.

The Mission has been warmly supported by "The Inquirer" and "Christian Life," and the British and Foreign Unitarian Association has promised assistance in the provision of literature. Already several Ministers have offered voluntary services. It is estimated that from £10 to £12 per month would cover the cost of maintenance, removal, travelling, advertising, posting, etc., and it is hoped that at least 100 meetings may be held in the five months from May to September inclusive.

Including the purchase and equipment of the Van, and the Mission expenses just enumerated, a sum of £250 would probably suffice for the first season's work. An anonymous donor has promised £100 towards the purchase of the Van, and a few smaller donations have been received.

An appeal is now made for £150 and for annual subscriptions, in the belief that there are many friends in the Churches who will gladly assist in this effort to carry our message into districts where our principles are practically unknown.

Cheques and P.O.'s may be forwarded to the Treasurer, Rev. T. P. Spedding, 91, Tweedale Street, Rochdale.—Signed,

A. GORDON, President.
T. P. SPEDDING, Treasurer.
W. R. SHANKS, Secretary.

November, 1905.

Why is Dr. Torrey Afraid?

By the Rev. WILFRID HARRIS, M.A.

I do not deny the existence of the fires, nor of the eternity "of that restless sea of fire" which I live and move and have my being in the midst of; and where I am as cool and comfortable as Shadrach, Medrach, and Abednego in the furnace. I acknowledge the fire on all sides of me, and that it has been for millions of years, and will be for millions more. Yet I do not call "the hosts of heaven" a "hell," I do not fear the fire. Sun and countless stars are burning with ceaseless and quenchless heat, and the universe is aflame below me, above me, around me!

Why is Dr. Torrey afraid of the fire, which he and I both see and know to be there? Why is he afraid of it? Is it not in God's hands? And in the midst of a sea of flaming fire our God leads us through the green pastures and by the still waters! There is no harm in the fire. The fire makes the grass grow, and makes the summer's day for us, and gives sunrise and sunset, and the twinkling starlight by night. These fires are beautiful. To them that love God all things work together for good. But to them that distrust God—ah——

If a child believes it is going to be burnt alive by its father, it will shriek and scream at sight of the fire already kindled on the hearthstone. It will shriek and scream at the dog and its teeth, already lying in wait on the hearthrug. And if we have the spirit of unbelief and of fear—the fireside of Heaven, and the lamps lit in the sky—will make us scream. Our God owns millions of miles of seas of fire. Some call it "Heaven," others call it "Hell." Faith or no faith in God's Love and goodness and Father Love? They who describe Heaven, and they who describe Hell, describe the same things; the one in fear, the other in love and trust.

In the midst of the burning fiery furnace I have gone skating many a time, and put on gloves to keep warm! This is God's doing.

Dr. Torrey's description of a ceaseless sea of everlasting fire may be accepted as a description of the universe, for the great bulk of its material substance seems to be ablaze, and the cool spots of earth and planets are apparently exceptional and rare. But why be afraid? The fires are so safely guarded we need a telescope to see where they are at times! God's Providence is seen in our situation in the midst of the fire, a safe place found for us.

Unitarianism.

We still employ the word (Unitarianism) in the old sense to emphasise the personal unity of God.

Now our Unitarian Churches stand for the unity of Creation, that cosmic order which is only another name for the unchangeableness and fidelity of the Creator; we stand for the unity of man, the organised solidarity of the race; we stand for the homogeneity of truth, the authority of conscience, the validity of reason. This, then, is the Unitarianism which we regard as a prophecy of the Church of the future.—Rev. Frank Walters.

The Unitarian Name.

Precisely the reason why so many Unitarians, not only in England, but in America and elsewhere, have taken the Unitarian name and cling to it, both for themselves and their churches, is because they regard it as the very broadest and least dogmatic of all names known to the Christian world, unless it be the names "Catholic" and "Universalist," and equally broad and undogmatic with them, because its central root is "Unity," and the unities of faith are necessarily its universals and its catholicities. No one has a right to limit the "Unity" at the heart of Unitarianism to mathematics. The numerical unity is true as far as it goes; but still deeper and greater are the spiritual unities—"I and my Father are one," "that ye all may be one," "one in Christ," "there shall be one flock and one shepherd," "all that love are one," "humanity is one," "religions are many, religion is one," "one far-off divine event, toward which the whole creation moves." Such unities as these, as well as the unity of God, express the real meaning of Unitarianism.—J. T. Sunderland.

Unitarian propagandism is often objected to as being "merely negative." The objection is far from being true; but, even were it true, would it be very serious? The removal of falsehood is as necessary to science as is the announcement of truth. As Mrs. Bernard Bosanquet vividly said recently at the annual meeting of the Charity Organisation Society, "No industry is more universally approved or more useful than that of the gardener. And yet most of a gardener's work is 'merely negative.' He prunes off the superfluous shoots; he pulls up the weeds; he shades off the excessive sun; he shelters off the excessive wind. And most of the positive work he can trust Nature to do for him.

The Minister's Services at your Homes.

Cases of serious illness or other trouble, in which he can be of any service, the Minister will attend to at once whenever required. As, however, it is impossible for him to know without being told, he will take it as a great kindness if relatives or friends will send word in some way when cases of sickness require his help.

A post-card from any distant part of the District or a messenger to the Minister's house should be sent in urgent cases. Sunday Morning or Evening after Service is a good time and place to tell the Minister of any cases needing attention. Unless something like this is done he may be days and even weeks in ignorance.

With regard to Marriages and Funerals, as early notice as possible should be given to the Minister, in order that he may not otherwise engage himself.

An Open Letter for Open Minds.

Dear Friends,—This time the "open letter" is from me to "Unity" readers, helpers and friends, and to any who may chance to come across this issue, and thus make the acquaintance of our little paper for the first time; in short to all whom it may concern.

In the first place, I wish to say in this concluding number of Vol. II. that "Unity" has met with most encouraging appreciation from its commencement Scarcely a week passes without the receipt of letters written in praise of this our monthly journal. If all the unsolicited words of praise were set down and printed in this copy of "Unity," they would fill the entire paper, and leave no room for anything else. But since the issue of the earliest numbers none of these testimonials of approval have been printed in our pages, the space has been required for other matter. Amongst expressions of approbation of the work that "Unity" is doing, our Unitarian weeklies, the "Inquirer" and "The Christian Life," have not been entirely silent, the latter being very warmly appreciative. In its issue of Nov. 4th, the following notice appeared:—

"The editor of 'Unity' takes it for granted that his readers 'are not narrow-minded.' If they, or any of them, are, the perusal of this spirited little paper should conduce to the expanding of their minds and embuing them with a new liking for largeness and charity. Indeed, we could heartily wish that 'Unity' had a wide circle of readers among the narrow-minded, for it could not fail to give them newness of view and some breadth of sympathy. For whether, on this point or that, one may feel oneself in agreement or in disagreement with 'Unity,' its tone and aim one must feel to be such as must do one good. How good, for example, is the definition of repentance given in this number—'being sorry enough to quit!' There is a whole 'body of divinity' couched in that one saying, culled, we are assured, from the lips of a little girl; and it is a 'body of divinity' with a soul of divinity to animate it, in which respect it differs from some other 'bodies of divinity" we could perhaps have named, if, indeed, we had not pretty well forgotten (and forgiven) them by this time. This golden sentence, however, we shall not easily bring ourselves to forget."

Such frank commendation is all the more valuable because of the source from which it comes, and "Unity" esteems itself fortunate in having won the good opinion of such an authority, all the more so because, as is well known, "The Christian Life" can sharply criticise when there is any need to do so. From the first "Unity" has called the attention of ite readers to the existence of our "weeklies," and it is good that there should be this relationship of mutual helpfulness.

This letter is also intended to be one of thanks to our readers, to our helpers and contributors, to the churches, too, which have made this their congregational magazine; without their co-operation the mission "Unity" attempts to fulfil could not be accomplished, and the Editor gratefully acknowledges their help. "Freely ye have received, freely give!" and there is no giving without getting an equal amount of good in return. Is there anything in "Unity" that is specially peculiar to itself? Any new way of putting things? A broader outlook—a more rational, unconventional, and yet reverent way of dealing with the highest concerns? It does stand for a humane religion with a fearless fronting of moral problems, for the idea of "Unity" in its widest sense, for the glorifying of the Unitarian name and all its modern significance.

But "Unity," like all other imperfect human things, has its defects. No one is more conscious of this than is the Editor. He naturally expects criticism and fault-finding, and he gets it. But it is impossible to give satisfaction to everybody at the same time—even including himself. Some readers would like bits of humour and pleasantries. Others consider it very offensive if any humour is introduced. Some assert that the "Hell" doctrine is no longer believed anywhere, and that there is no need to use the pages of "Unity" to denounce it; others say "Go for it! Torrey preaches it ,and it is still taken for granted in all the orthodox bodies, and 'Unity' ought to denounce it, and convince young people and older folks that it is not true."

But there has been very little of this fault-finding, not so much possibly as "Unity" deserved. The paper will continue to be natural and human—human enough to have defects and shortcomings, and to indulge also in the grandest longings after the absolutely perfect. Its ministry is now widespread and far-reaching; it puts an infinite value on every soul of man, stands for unlimited faith in God, urges fearless search for truth, fears no revelation that may come, but faces the future with confidence.

THE EDITOR.

Religion Applied to Society.

Religion to be real must be practical, that is—it must be applied.

Religious organisations set themselves the task of saving the souls of men. The question, therefore, that confronts every thinking man who gives any consideration to religion is: How can the soul of man be saved?

What is the saving of the soul.? What is the soul? The soul is the man himself considered either as a whole, or as a spiritual being apart from his material environment. If by "soul" is meant man's life, it includes the saving of the body. If it means the security of the spiritual being inhabiting the fleshly body, it must still include the security of the body, because the welfare of the one depends in this world upon the welfare of the other to a very great extent. As a matter of real experience there is little success possible in the saving of souls in this life apart from the saving of men's

bodies. The health of the mind depends on the health of the body; moral welfare is affected or disaffected by the order or disorder among bodily appetites and passions. Starve the body and the mind is also weakened. When the whole strength and energy is taken up in the anxious struggle to get bread for the body with oppportunity for no other concern, there can be no care for the saving of the soul.

Can any one man, unaided by any of his fellows, succeed in the saving of his own soul? Can he make himself secure from evil without consideration for the welfare of others? No man is sufficient for himself. He is dependent on the help of his fellows. And no man can realise his own good except he realises their good. If they are foul and corrupt their evil condition attacks him with its vile contagion. The infectious disease, physical or moral, puts him in peril. How shall he escape it? Only by sanitation that will make them clean. No man can be saved except as others are made safe.

The religious problem then is social—not merely individual. While any are lost in corruption not one is safe. Allow men to be starved in body and you allow their souls to be lost. Permit any to exist in moral degradation, and there is not moral security for one. Disease, physical or moral in one, means that all are in jeopardy every moment until his disease is destroyed.

The Religious problem embraces all that pertains to life; it includes all other problems; it is not possible to have the perfect life while any are denied opportunity.Religion is a reality to any man only so far as he applies it to all human affairs. It is a recognition of social duty, for only inasmuch as ye do it to one of these least ye do it unto Me.

Notes and News.

Under this heading items of news from churches and organisations connected with the movement for rational religion will be admitted and recorded; notes also of anything taking place in other churches, and movements indicating the growth towards reasonableness and humanity in religion, and towards freedom in theology.

As the propaganda of reasonable ideas of religion and life is the special mission of "Unity," these items of news from churches and other bodies must be such as will be in line with this special work. It must not be a record of tea parties, concerts, sales of work, and the like; but rather of utterances and efforts to propagate truth or of methods of working, and of organising for the true life.

Will all those churches which have adopted "Unity" as their congregational magazine, make a point of sending, through some officer whose duty it shall be, such notes or news to the Editor, not later than the 15th of each month? To such officer the following questions may be a guide:—

(1) Have you anything of special Unitarian interest to report from sermons or lectures delivered in connection with your church, or in your district?

(2) Have you any items of news in print or otherwise concerning efforts in your district to propagate reasonable religion amongst the young; in discussion societies; by the distribution of propagandist literature; by classes for study of theological and social problems; by newspaper correspondence; or otherwise?

(3) Can you report glaring instances in your district of the advocacy of extreme orthodox opinions—any statements indicating that false ideas are very much alive, and that there is much work to be done yet to destroy belief in such?

Answers to the above queries will afford useful information as to the real missionary work that is being done, what progress is being made in the march of right ideas, and will indicate also what work is required, and where effort is most needed.

"The Unitarian Van" has been secured. Subcriptions in aid of the work are coming in. And a reader of this magazine suggests that some money might be also specially subscribed for the supply of copies of "Unity" for distribution in connection with the van mission.

Propaganda by Theological Lantern Lecture is to be one of the features of a United Mission of a group of Unitarian Churches connected with the East Cheshire Christian Union.

The Rev. J. E. Stead recently settled at Mossley, near Manchester, has been delivering a series of sermons on "The Prodigal Son," and invited questions from the congregation at the close of each service. Will Mossley friends report result of the experiment?

"He was despised and rejected of men." Were these words written about Jesus? Do not most people think so?

Are people indifferent to religion because they do not attend places of worship? Or is it that they fail to see what use the churches are to them in their struggle for life?

Is it not true that the people are really eager for religion, and are looking for it? That is—Religion that will attempt to make Brotherhood or mutual help and protection an organised reality. They believe in that, and are hungering for it. Indeed they perish for lack of it.

The great day of religion is coming. It will break through many pet conventions; but it will be more human and effectual.

It will be of interest to our readers to know that "Unity" is now adopted by the Yorkshire Unitarian Union as its monthly magazine for use in the 25 churches included in that body; and that the Western Union of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches has decided to incorporate it as an inset in its "Western Union Chronicle" for the use of its 28 churches, beginning with the month of January. This will mean that "Unity" will have a circulation in about 80 churches in January, as against about 50 now.

HOME CIRCLE.

If we have not learned that God's in man
And Man in God again—
That to love thy God is to love thy brother,
And to serve the Lord is to serve each other—
Then Christ was born in vain!
—Charlotte Perkins Stetson.

A Morning Prayer.

The day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating concerns and duties. Help us to play the man; help us to perform them with laughter and kind faces; let cheerfulness abound with industry. Give us to go blithely on our business all the day; bring us to our resting place weary and contented and undishonoured; and grant us in the end the gift of sleep.—Robert Louis Stevenson.

An Evening Prayer.

If I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not; if morning skies
Books, and my food, and summer rain,
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain:
Lord, thy most pointed pleasure take,
And stab my spirit broad awake.
—Robert Louis Stevenson.

The Story of a Bell.

There is a pretty story told of the bell that hangs in the church tower of the little town of Grosslamtz, in the north of Germany. On it is engraved its history, a bas-relief representing a six-eared stalk of wheat, and the date, October 13th, 1729. The bell was wanted in the village, but the people were poor. Where was the money to come from? Everyone offered to give what he could, but the amount was not half enough.

One Sunday, when the schoolmaster, Gottfried Hahn, was going to church, he noticed growing out of the churchyard wall a green stalk of wheat, the seed of which must have been dropped by some passing bird. The idea struck him that perhaps this one stalk of wheat could be made to help them in raising money for the bell they wanted so badly.

He waited till the wheat was ripe, and then plucked the six ears on it, and sowed them in his own garden. The next year he gathered the little crop, and sowed it again and again, till at last he had to give some of the seed to others. In the eighth year the crop was so large that when it was sold there was money enough to buy a bell.

And there it hangs, with its story, and its birthday engraved upon it, and above the legend a cast of the wheat stalk to which the bell owes its existence.

God, not a Spy.

Some natives of South America answered Roman Catholic missionaries as follows:—"You say that the God of the Christians knows everything, that nothing is hidden from him, that he is everywhere, and sees all that is done below. Now, we do not desire a God so sharp-sighted; we choose to live with freedom in our woods, without having a perpetual observer of our actions over our heads."

But, is God a watchful spy in that way? Surely not. There is no necessity for it. Our deeds are recorded on our souls by their effects, and on the characters of those who are influenced by us. By those effects, and by countless other natural ways God is able to know what we are, and what we do, without being on the watch against us. Man knows what his fellow-man is thinking thousands of miles away, by telepathy; what he is saying, by wireless telegraphy; and if all the threads of his wonderful providence are in his hands, is not God able to know what is happening everywhere and anywhere by the feel of the threads without being on the watch? Is he not sensitive to the currents of moral atmosphere that flow from each human being? Why should we think of God as a spy?

No Compromise.

The Rev. Dr. Miller, of Princeton, New Jersey, U.S.A., was an orthodox divine, who was personally acquainted with the Unitarian, Dr. Priestley. Dr. Miller recorded a conversation Dr. Priestley had with him. Dr. Miller avowed himself a Trinitarian and a Calvinist, and Dr. Priestley replied:—

"I do not wonder that you Calvinists entertain and express a strongly unfavourable opinion of us Unitarians. The truth is, there neither can, nor ought to be, any compromise between us. If you are right, we are not Christians at all; and if we are right, you are gross idolators."

The Editor's Study Table.

"God and the Soul,' by R. A. Armstrong, B.A., 206 pages, 6d.; "The Soul, its Sorrows and Aspirations," by Francis William Newman, 340 pages, 6d.; "The First Three Gospels, their Origin and Relations," by J. Estlin Carpenter, M.A., 350 pages, 6d.; "The Passing and Permanent in Religion," by Minot Judson Savage, D.D., 163 pages, 6d.—Book Room, Essex Hall, London.

These cheap editions of valuable books are creditable to the enterprise of the publishers. A previous edition of Mr. Armstrong's famous essay has already been reviewed in "Unity," Vol. I. Its merits have now received world-wide recognition, and it has been translated into several foreign languages, and published in various countries. Of the many able pro-

ductions of the writer this is acknowledged to be his chief work. To those who wish to know the solid grounds of rational religion, or to have an effective statement of them at hand for reference—there could be nothing better. It is just the book to put into the hands of those who are in agnostic darkness. Francis William Newman's work on "The Soul" attracted great attention when it was first published in 1849. "Spiritual and mystical natures warmly welcomed it," says Professor Upton, "but, of course, its heterodoxy called forth sharp criticisms from many quarters." When Dr. Martineau first read the book he wrote to his friend, the author: "Now I have read 'The Soul,' and shall bless you for it, with thanks I cannot speak, so long as I have a soul that lives. Nothing that I have ever read—unless it be some scattered thoughts of Pascal's—has come so close to me, and so strengthened a deep but too shrinking faith." Francis William Newman, the reverent rationalist, was opposite in thought or mental attitude to the famous Cardinal John Henry Newman, his brother; the Cardinal made mind and conscience to bow in slavish subservience to his Church, whereas Francis set up his mind and conscience as judges of the Church. But the rationalism made him not less devoutly religious than his brother; indeed, it gave him a surer basis for his faith.

Professor Carpenter's "First Three Gospels" is a marvellous book. Whoso reads and understands it is thereby furnished with a well grounded education in Biblical criticism, and put into possession of the results of the best scholarship and the most up-to-date conclusions concerning the growth of the New Testament Gospel records. Speaking of this book, Mrs. Humphrey Ward said: "Nothing can be more interesting"; "The real interest lies in the patient, and, to the reader, fascinating endeavour, to get behind the Gospels and behind the Church to the actual words of Jesus"; "It is no ordinary text book, and the public at large would do well to read it."

Dr. Savage's books are well known on this side of the Atlantic, as they deserve to be, but the seven chapters here presented are new to the British public, as they have been selected from a larger work published in the United States. The titles of these chapters speak for themselves: The Universe; Man; Bibles; Gods and God; Saviours; Worship; Prayer. —The reasonableness and sanity of nearly everything that Dr. Savage says make his utterances, oral or written, singularly attractive. Anyone beginning to read the pages of this book is won by the outright frankness of the style, to continue to the end. At once one realises the secret of the author's popularity; and it is no wonder that his published teachings are amongst the most widely read in America. What an influence in the humanising of religious ideas! And what effective propaganda of reasonable views this widespread vogue must be.

These sixpenny editions must be commended to "Unity" readers. The publishers deserve all the support that can be given them to secure an extensive sale of such literature. And all who wish to assist in this missionary work are thus presented with a grand opportunity. It would be easy to criticise opinions contained in these books, to discuss whether Newman's view of the soul is less true than Martineau's, or less satisfactory than Armstrong's, or the different grounds of belief in a Future Life presented, or quite a number of other questions raised, but that is not necessary here; it suffices to say that helpful guidance in the free and reverent search for truth is just what these books supply.

"The God of this World," by John B. Middleton, from the house of Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, and Co., 3s. 6d., is a novel written with the serious purpose of influencing "disinherited fellow-citizens"—"to strike an effective blow for Economic Freedom and the restoration of the Natural Order." In so far as this book deals with Religion it advocates going back to Jesus and his teachings, as opposed to Mammonism — the God of this world—and the superstitions of orthodox theology. For those who have read nothing but popular theology, and who have never seen Lytton's "Coming Race" and Bellamy's "Looking Backward," and the like, there is much that is new in this story. For such as these it contains instructive reading, and it is not devoid of interest to any who may open its pages. The author's prognostications of events during this 20th Century are not likely to be fulfilled. Mammonism will not reduce the population of the British Isles from 40 millions to four millions in the next 80 years, nor will it blot out entirely all popular recollection of Christianity. But that is part of the author's fiction put together as the channel for what he wants to teach. Though not from a practised hand, the book is well worth reading.

Three pretty Brochure Booklets—substitutes for Christmas Cards, published by Arthur C. Fifield, 44, Fleet Street, constitute a very happy idea. The customary Christmas Card, however artistic, cannot be so useful as one of these booklets. "Sayings of Tolstoy" (64 pages, 6s. nett) has 365 sayings culled from the works of the great Russian prophet, or one gem for every day from January 1st to December 31st. "Flowers from Upland Valley," by Elizabeth Gibson (32 pages, 4d. nett), also contains a suggestive thought for every day in the year. "The Year's Horoscope," by Ethel Wheeler (32 pages, 4d. nett), consists of twelve appropriate poems, one for each month. Each of these booklets is provided with a greeting page at the beginning, they are not too heavy for halfpenny postage, nor too large to get into an envelope ($4\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $5\frac{1}{2}$), and are worth much more than the published price. Persons puzzled to know what to send to their friends instead of the hackneyed cards would do well to get these booklets.

"The Miracles of Faith," by Mohit Chandra Sen, M.A., published at Calcutta (no price), is a small pamphlet report of an address delivered at a Brahma Mandir by a highly cultured Hindoo scholar, who combines reverent rationalism with a fine spiritual faith full of sympathy with the higher conceptions of real Christianity.

Texts and Comments.

Under this heading the writer has been asked to contribute a column to "Unity" month by month. Before actually entering upon the work, which is cheerfully undertaken, a few preliminary remarks seem called for.

To the earlier Unitarians of modern times, as to Christians in general, the Bible was the absolute standard and unquestioned guide in all matters of faith, and—rigid scripturalists as they were—Unitarians renounced the prevailing presentation of Christianity on the ground, clearly defined by the sixth article of the Church of England, that "whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith." To-day, however, few Unitarians, if any, would feel bound to accept a doctrine solely because it was taught by one or more writers of the 66 books comprising our Bible. The seat of authority for Unitarians is no longer a book, no matter how sacred or venerable; the authority of the living soul is recognised as higher than the authority of the Bible. Taking truth for authority, and not authority for truth, "our Bible is the sifted truth of the ages." Nevertheless, it is still contended that the popular doctrines of Christendom, of which the theory of the Trinity is the keystone, were foreign to the minds of the writers of the Bible, and that the leading beliefs and principles of Unitarians find their support in its pages.

Until the main body of Christians have advanced to this position, however, and ceased to appeal to texts as to the veritable word of God, it is for Unitarians a duty and a wise course to combat error on the ground and with the weapons chosen by its advocates. There are useful men and women in "orthodox" communities who are only to be won to our way of looking at religion by this method, and it becomes us not to neglect any legitimate means whereby what we hold to be valuable truth may be sown in the hearts of our fellow Christians.

After generations of Unitarian commentators, many of whom were remarkable for their scholarship and power of expounding the Scriptures, very little that is new remains to be said. Certainly the writer is not in a position to warrant him in offering original explanations of Bible texts. His task here will be a far humbler one, and consist of selecting passages from the writings of competent theologians, and either reproducing their remarks *in toto*, or, where their length prohibits such a course, giving the gist in a briefer form. This column will, therefore, partake of the nature of patchwork—though the seams may not always be apparent to the reader—for which reason a *nom de plume* has been sought which should indicate the fact, and the Latin equivalent for "a maker of patchwork" has been chosen for the purpose.

To conclude this preface. The Editor and those associated with him in the work desire to make "Unity" of practical use to all its readers. Among them, it is hoped, are many who have not yet attached themselves to our household of Faith, and who, having been trained from their youth to regard the utterances of the writers of the Bible of supreme importance in questions of Christian doctrine, hesitate to embrace our reasonable and attractive form of Christianity until they are satisfied that the Bible, or at any rate the New Testament, lends its countenance to it. Such persons are cordially invited to suggest texts with a doctrinal bearing for treatment under this heading; and to Sunday school teachers and other amateurs interested in the spiritual welfare of the young, and in propagandist work, a similar invitation is extended. Communications should be addressed to the undersigned,

CENTONARIUS, c/o The Editor.

Full of Hope.

Some time ago Edwin D. Mead, the editor of "The New England Magazine," and one of New England's leading citizens, wrote the editor of "The Congregationalist" as follows:—

"I am full of hope for the life of the world because I believe in God. This world is God's world. Eternal reason is its central principle. Good cheer is possible in this world to men who believe that God's other name is Justice.

"I am full of hope for the world because I am a student of history, and the lesson of history is a lesson of hope. This world is a better world to live in than it ever was before. Read any history of the nineteenth century and ask whether you would rather live in the England, the France, the Germany, the Italy, the Spain, the America of the first pages or of the last?

"Consider the question of war. During the millennium which followed Alfred the Great, war was the normal condition of things, the regular vocation of nations. To-day war is not the chief or common business of Christendom. The tribunal, and not the wars, will mark the epoch."

A new Unitarian movement has been successfully established at Nelson, with the help of Burnley and Colne frinds and other workers from churches in North-East Lancashire. A church has now been constituted, and the first anniversary services have been held.

NOTICE.—Vol. II. of "Unity," bound in stiff paper covers, with detailed Index, and comprising 15 monthly issues (October 1904, to December 1905) illustrated, and with frontispiece portrait of the late Rev. R. A. Armstrong, B.A., will be ready in December—price 1s.—by post 1s. 3d. Readers wishing to secure copies should order at once.

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UNITARIAN DOCTRINES IN SCRIPTURE.

One God, in one person only:

"The true worshippers shall worship the Father."—John iv., 23.

"When ye pray, say Our Father."—Matt. vi., 9; Luke xi., 2.

"The Lord our God, the Lord is One."—Mark xii., 29.

"To us there is but one God, the Father."—I. Cor. viii., 6. (See also Isa. xlii., 8; xliv., 6; the words "Trinity," "God the Son," "God the Holy Ghost"—are not in the Bible).

Jesus, a Man:

"This man—the carpenter's son"—Matt. xiii., 55. "A man that hath told you the truth."—John viii., 40. "A man which told me all things."—John iv., 29. "The man—called Jesus."—John ix., 11. "Jesus—a man approved of God."—Acts ii., 22. "The one man Jesus Christ."—Rom. v., 15.

Man, the child, the son of God, and Human Nature Divine:

(God) "Our Father."—Matt. vi., 9; Luke ix., 2; Rom. i., 7; I. Cor. i., 3; and many passages.

(Men) "Sons of" (God).—Matt. v., 45; Luke vi., 35. "We are—the offspring of God."—Acts xvii., 28-29. "We are the children of God."—Rom. viii., 15, 16, 21; Gal. iii., 26; I. John iii., 1-2; Philip ii., 15. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. xix., 14. "The true light" in "every man."—John i., 9. "Partakers of the divine nature."—II. Peter i., 4. "The lump is holy."—Rom. xi., 16.

The Fatherhood of God, universal, unchangeable, everlasting—infinitely loving:

"Good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."—Psalm 145, 9. "He is kind—merciful—to the unthankful and evil."—Luke vi., 35, 36. "God is no respecter of persons."—Acts x., 34; II. Chron. xix., 7; Rom. ii., 11; Eph. vi., 9. "Not the will of your Father—that one should perish."—Matt. xviii., 14; "God is love."—I. John iv., 8.

(Nothing) "shall be able to separate us from the love of God."—Rom. viii., 38, 39.

(He has) "no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning."—James i., 17; "Willeth that all men should be saved."—I. Tim. ii., 4.

The Brotherhood of Man—Universal:

"All ye are brethren."—Matt. xxiii., 8.

"Love your enemies!"—Matt. v., 44; Luke vi., 27.

"Inasmuch as ye did it to one—ye did it to me."—Matt. xxv., 40.

"We who are many are one—and severally members one of another."—Rom. xii., 5; I. Cor. x., 17; Eph. iv., 25. (See also I. Cor. xii., 26; Gal. iii., 28; John x., 16; Matt. xx., 16).

UNITARIANISM IS:

Christianity as Christ taught it.
God's Fatherhood for all, for ever.
The Brotherhood of all men, everywhere
Salvation of all; not one to be lost.
Safety of each by the safety of all.
Unity of God in one Person—the Father.
Unity of Man; unity of all Truth.
Freethought in Religion.
Character before creed.
One world at a time.

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[ADVT.]

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"Do thyself no harm." Acts xvi., 28.

"Ye shall know them by their fruits." Matt. vii., 16.

"To HIM that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to HIM it is sin." James iv., 17.

"Be ye therefore perfect even as your (Heavenly) Father." Matt. v., 48.

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I "abstain from all appearance of evil." 1 Thess. v., 22.

I "Cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light. Rom. xiii., 12.

"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me."

"Whether therefore I eat or drink, or whatsoever I do, I do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. x., 31.

"That I can reprove while the mote is in my own eye."

I "am my brother's keeper." Gen. iv., 9.

I do "love my neighbour as myself." Matt. xix., 19.

That "whatsoever is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, or anything of good report, praise or virtue, I think on these things and do them." Phil. iv., 8.

I "am a living epistle known and read of all men" (including juvenile smokers). 2 Cor. iii., 2.

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